

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

## 1. An image forming apparatus comprising:

voice recognition means for recognizing entered voice;

5 acceptance means for accepting a start request to start operation of said voice recognition means;

output means for outputting prescribed output information; and

output discriminating means for determining  
10 whether said output means is currently producing an output;

wherein if said acceptance means has accepted the start request during the output of the output information by said output means, said voice

15 recognition means starts recognition of the entered voice after said output means suspends the output of the output information.

## 2. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

20 receiving means for receiving the output information; and

storage means for storing output information received by said receiving means following the suspension of the output of the output information by  
25 said output means.

## 3. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the output is a printout.

4. An image forming apparatus comprising:

voice recognition means for recognizing entered voice;

voice-recognition discriminating means for  
5 determining whether said voice recognition means is  
currently performing voice recognition;

printing means for printing prescribed print  
information;

printing discriminating means for determining  
10 whether said printing means is currently printing;

receiving means for receiving the print  
information; and

storage means for storing the print information;  
wherein if said receiving means has received  
15 another print information during voice recognition by  
said voice recognition means, said storage means  
stores the another print information; and

after all another print information has been  
stored in said storage means, said printing means  
20 prints said another print information.

5. The apparatus according to claim 4, further  
comprising display means for notifying of the  
receiving state by lighting of a lamp or by a screen  
display, which includes a liquid crystal screen, when  
25 said receiving means is receiving the print  
information in a case where said voice recognition  
means is performing voice recognition.

6. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said receiving means receives the print information, which includes image data, via a telephone line or network.

7. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein after  
5 said voice recognition means has completed performing voice recognition, said printing means prints the print information that has been stored in said storage means.

8. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said  
10 printing discriminating means discriminates that printing is in progress during all processing relating to printing in extending from counting the number of originals prior to printing by said printing means until it becomes possible to perform the next printing  
15 operation, inclusive of sorter actuation, following printing.

9. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said voice-recognition discriminating means determines that voice recognition is in progress up to voice  
20 recognition processing that includes talk-back of results of voice recognition.

10. An image forming method in an image forming apparatus having voice recognition means for recognizing entered voice and output means for  
25 outputting prescribed output information, said method comprising:

an output discriminating step of determining

whether said output means is currently producing an output;

an acceptance step of accepting a start request to start operation of said voice recognition means;

5 a suspending step of suspending the output of the output information by said output means if the start request has been accepted during output of the output information by said output means; and

a voice recognition step of starting voice  
10 recognition of the entered voice after output by said output means has been suspended.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein said image forming apparatus further has storage means for storing output information, said method further  
15 comprising:

a receiving step of receiving the output information; and

a storing step of storing, in said storage means, output information received following suspension of  
20 the output of the output information by said output means.

12. The method according to claim 11, further comprising an output step of outputting the output information, which has been stored in said storage  
25 means, after said voice recognition means has completed performing voice recognition.

13. The method according to claim 10, wherein the

output is a printout.

14. An image forming method in an image forming apparatus having voice recognition means for recognizing entered voice, printing means for printing  
5 prescribed print information and storage means for storing print information, said method comprising:

a voice-recognition discriminating step of determining whether said voice recognition means is currently performing voice recognition;

10 a printing discriminating step of determining whether said printing means is currently printing;

a receiving step of receiving the print information;

a storing step of storing the print information  
15 in said storage means if the print information has been received during printing of the print information by said printing means or during voice recognition by said voice recognition means; and

a printing step of printing the print information  
20 after all print information has been stored in said storage means.

15. The method according to claim 14, further comprising a display step of notifying of the receiving state by lighting of a lamp or by a screen  
25 display, which includes a liquid crystal screen, when the print information is being received in a case where said voice recognition means is performing voice

recognition.

16. The method according to claim 14, wherein said receiving step receives the print information, which includes image data, via a telephone line or network.

5 17. The method according to claim 14, wherein said printing discriminating step discriminates that printing is in progress during all processing relating to printing in a period extending from counting of number of originals prior to printing by said printing  
10 means until it becomes possible to perform the next printing operation, inclusive of sorter actuation, following printing.

18. The method according to claim 14, wherein said voice-recognition discriminating step determines that  
15 voice recognition is in progress up to voice recognition processing that includes talk-back of results of voice recognition.

19. A program for causing a computer to control an image forming apparatus having voice recognition means  
20 for recognizing entered voice and output means for outputting prescribed output information, said program comprising:

an output discriminating procedure for determining whether said output means is currently  
25 producing an output;

an acceptance procedure for accepting a start request to start operation of said voice recognition

means;

a suspending procedure for suspending output of the output information by said output means if the start request has been accepted during output of the  
5 output information by said output means; and

a voice recognition procedure for starting voice recognition of the entered voice after output by said output means has been suspended.